

THE CORRUPT LEGACY OF PAUL DESMARAIS

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The lavish praise which is usually heaped upon Paul Desmarais and his business legacy mostly centers upon what he supposedly did for Quebec. Few people really know what Quebec and its government have actually done for Paul Desmarais and his business empire. The

¹ Robin Philpot, "Paul Desmarais: un bilan s'impose," *Le Devoir*, 12 octobre 2013; Christopher Richard Wade Dettling, editor and translator, *The Corrupt Legacy of Paul Desmarais*, Robin Philpot, archive.org, 3 July 2016.

answer is very simple: *The ruling-class of Quebec greatly enriched Paul Desmarais and his family over the years.*²

Paul Desmarais' life, without the support of the Government of Quebec (which according to a famous contemporary aspires to become "not merely a province but also a country among the nations"), would have been very much the opposite of what it was.³ "We French-Canadians, when we feel threatened, we always turn towards our government," Paul Desmarais once said, "it is our mentality."⁴

² "Les éloges à l'endroit de Paul Desmarais convergent sur ce que l'homme d'affaires aurait donné au Québec. Mais peu s'attardent sur ce que le Québec et son État ont donné à M. Desmarais. Il y a une réponse courte à cette question: Tout!" Robin Philpot, "Paul Desmarais: un bilan s'impose," *Le Devoir*, 12 octobre 2013. [Editor]

³ "Sans le Québec, un Québec qui aspirait, selon les mots d'un contemporain célèbre, à devenir 'non pas une province pas comme les autres, mais un pays comme les autres,' l'avenir canadien de Paul Desmarais aurait été bouché." Philpot, *Ibidem*. [Editor]

⁴ "Les Canadiens français qui se sentent menacés se sont toujours tournés vers le Québec, disait-il. Cela fait partie de leur conscience et cela fait partie de la mienne." *Ibidem*. [Editor]

Peter Charles Newman and Diane Francis, Canadian establishmentarian writers and journalists, have explained the meteoric rise of Paul Desmarais in the 1960s in the following manner: Desmarais was “French Canadian and politically correct.” In other words, Paul Desmarais was a Franco-Canadian arch-federalist devoted to the interests of the new Canadian establishment, and an arch-enemy of the Quebec anti-federalist movement.⁵ While the analyses of Newman and Francis are not entirely at odds with the legacy of Paul Desmarais, they conflict with the traditional view of Canadian heritage, since Canada is often portrayed as a paradise of multiculturalism.⁶

⁵ See: “No businessman in Canadian history has ever had more intimate and more extended influence with Canadian prime ministers than Desmarais.” Peter Charles Newman, “Epitaph for the two-party state,” *Macleans*, 1 November 1993, 14. [Editor]

⁶ *New Canadian establishmentarian* analyses avoid Robin Philpot’s point altogether: People like Peter Charles Newman and Diane Francis were never in possession of the *exact historiographical and world historical conception* of the *Quebec Regime in Ottawa and Kingdom of Paul Desmarais, 1968-2006*, when Canada was ruled by Quebecers for nearly a half century, except for one year under Joseph “Joe” Clark, Kim Campbell and John Turner. See: “Becoming PM on June 30,

The Financial Empire of Paul Desmarais

Paul Desmarais was never an entrepreneur: “Starting at the bottom takes far too long ... I have never done anything from scratch.”⁷ Desmarais was the builder of a financial empire based entirely upon the constant influx of easy money, which was quickly turned into a vast fortune. The enormous wealth Paul Desmarais thus accumulated could only be obtained through his patronage of government officials and his influence in Quebec politics: That is the history of Desmarais’ takeover of *Gelco (Gatineau Electric)*, later *Gesca*, and also *Power Corporation*, which received huge subsidies over the years from the Quebec Government. After Paul Desmarais’ takeover of *Power Corporation* and the

Turner dissolved parliament on July 9.” Robert Bothwell, “John Napier Turner,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, vol. III, 1st edition, James Harley Marsh, editor, Edmonton, 1985, 1860. See Also: “John Napier Turner served as prime minister of Canada for 2½ months in 1984.” Christina McCall, “John Napier Turner,” *The World Book Encyclopedia*, vol. 19, Chicago, 1992, 516. [Editor]

⁷ Paul Desmarais: “Je ne trouve rien que j’ai commencé ... commencer à zéro, c’est trop lent pour moi.” [Editor]

Montreal newspaper *La Presse*, the notion of the *Kingdom of Desmarais* first appeared, when the young Liberal deputy Yves Michaud sounded the alarm at the Quebec National Assembly in 1968.⁸ Few people really seemed to care.

Very early in his career, Paul Desmarais learned to always cultivate very close political and economic connexions with provincial and federal elites, so that every Premier of Quebec and Prime Minister of Canada, at least since the time of Maurice Duplessis, used to eat

⁸ Yves Michaud: “If this problem is not corrected by a very serious inquiry on the part of elected officials, in accordance with the laws of our Assembly, the Desmarais oligarchy will threaten the power of our Parliament: Does the dangerous nature of this situation require even further proof? Will not this oligarchy eventually usurp the sovereign will of our representatives, and even our Prime Minister? ... At this very moment, the *Gelco-Trans-Canada Group* [controlled by Paul Desmarais] is seeking to further acquire *Le Soleil Newspaper*, the readership of which is more than 175,000 people, as well as the daily newspaper *Le Droit* in Ottawa, which has a readership of some 45,000 people.” Robin Philpot, *Derrière L'État Desmarais: Power*, 2ième édition, Montréal, 2014, 13-14. [Editor]

from his hand,—with the sole exceptions of Premiers René Lévesque and Jacques Parizeau.⁹

People still talk about Paul Desmarais and the pseudo-flight of capital in 1967 which caused Premier Daniel Johnson to turn his back upon the independence movement, after having been elected in large measure based upon the slogan “Equality or independence” (*Égalité ou indépendance*). Few people today recall the real flight of capital from Quebec in the early 1990s, right under the nose of Premier Robert Bourassa, of which his close friend Paul Desmarais was the secret architect. In

⁹ See: “Jean-Louis Lévesque, the Montreal financier from far-away Gaspé, ‘knew first-hand the difficulties that awaited a French-Canadian in business, and therefore he took the young Paul Desmarais under his wing, and led him into the realm of French-Canadian high finance.’” Jules Belanger, *J.-Louis Lévesque: La montée d’un Gaspésien aux sommets des affaires*, Saint-Laurent, 1996, 138. See Also: “The Lévesque which most Canadians have heard about is the great orator, René, the Minister of Natural Resources of the Province of Quebec. Jean-Louis Lévesque is his wealthy distant cousin, who owns the largest financial empire in Quebec.” *Ibidem*, 166-167. [Editor]

early 1989, in the largest financial transaction in Canadian history, Paul Desmarais sold *Consolidated-Bathurst*, the crown jewel of the Quebec pulp and paper industry, which had benefitted from very generous subsidies from Quebec taxpayers over the years, for \$2.6 billion to American investors. The sale of *Montréal Trust* later followed for some \$550 million: *Thus, Paul Desmarais ripped-off (arrachés) \$3 billion in natural resources from the hard-working people of Quebec.*¹⁰

¹⁰ See: “Robin Philpot’s charge against Paul Desmarais is straightforward: *The vast fortune Desmarais accumulated over the years could only be obtained through his patronage of government and his influence in politics: ‘All the Premiers of Quebec and Prime Ministers of Canada, since the time of Maurice Duplessis ... used to eat from his hand.’ In other words, Paul Desmarais was a big crook.* The political and economic inclinations of Robin Philpot are not here in question. *The historical issue at hand is whether or not Paul Desmarais was an extremely corrupt businessman, and therefore an evil person.* Robin Philpot advances a number of instances in support of his historical argument: Unless these examples of Desmarais’ legacy are demonstrably false, the argument of Philpot *stands*, and the *conclusion* is therefore *irresistible*. The *political and economic consequences* of Philpot’s argument are of great interest with regards to the *historical development* of the *rational conception of Canada* and its *actualisation* in the *world of today*: By far, the *Kingdom of Paul*

The Kingdom of Paul Desmarais

Yet even though he played all of his games, Paul Desmarais the master of deception was still haunted by journalists, unions and politicians, all of whom wanted to know where and when he was going to make his next investment. His answer was nearly always the same: *The political and economic uncertainty in Quebec frightens-away the serious investor like himself who requires a return on his investment of at least 15 per cent.* In the 1970s an advisor to René Lévesque insisted that he meet Paul Desmarais because the latter supported “half of the population of the province of Quebec.” This was never really the case. Outside of his newspaper chain, Paul Desmarais never invested anything in Quebec after 1990, although he continued to fill the dirty troughs of the corrupt swine. It is not surprising therefore that on the eve of the second Quebec referendum in 1995, Premier

Desmarais and Power Corporation was the main backer of the *Quebec Regime in Ottawa, 1968-2006.*” Christopher Richard Wade Dettling, *Robin Philpot’s Argument and the Legacy of Paul Desmarais*, archive.org, 2016, 12-14. [Editor]

Jacques Parizeau spoke of the Kingdom of Paul Desmarais, which continued, after having made \$billions off Quebec, to control its ruling class, while investing \$millions abroad, but practically nothing at home.¹¹

¹¹ See: "In order to better align ourselves with France, imagine for a moment that in Canada we had established a central government and that the provinces no longer had any power or freedom of taxation whatsoever. Imagine also that, among other things, the *Royal Bank of Canada*, the *Bank of Montreal*, the *Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce* were all nationalized, along with *General Motors*. Imagine also that nearly all sources of energy belonged to the government, as well as all the railroads and the telephone networks and telecommunications systems. And don't forget to include all small financial institutions: The *Sun Life*, for example. You really think that we can organize and coordinate our credit and financial institutions, as well as our public expenses and political investments, as they are today!" Jacques Parizeau, "Insaisissable Planification," *Cité Libre*, 13.57(Mai, 1963): 5-6. Today the last remnants of the *Quebec Regime in Ottawa and Kingdom of Desmarais* have abandoned, for the most part, their early Franco-Canadian nationalist and French chauvinist supporters: They are now a very expensive burden. The *New Quebec Regime* wants the ethnic votes, especially in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal: That is where the \$billions in new federal infrastructure will flow, since upwards of 35 per cent of the contracts end-up in the hands of organized crime, and then a juicy cut gets kicked-back into the pockets and overseas accounts of the criminal ruling class (Charbonneau Commission). [Editor]

Paul Desmarais and the Quebec Regime in Ottawa

In this day and age, nobody really remembers Paul Desmarais as a Franco-Canadian nationalist. The history of Canada and Confederation is such that, without changing his name and abandoning his heritage, Paul Desmarais really had no other choice.

In fact, Paul Desmarais was a Franco-Canadian nationalist, he was just not a Quebec nationalist.¹²

¹² Paul Desmarais: "French Canadians have not been able to think of the long-term in business because they've had no economic power. That is what must change." See: Sheila McLeod Arnopoulos, *Voices from French Ontario*, Kingston/Montreal, 1982, 161. Paul Desmarais' conception of "*economic power*" is very special, and involves mostly himself and his close relatives like Jean Chrétien, and ignores the *exact historiographical and world historical conception of the American world*, as does the Quebec Regime myth of Maurice Duplessis, the Roman Catholic Church and the Great Darkness (*la grande noirceur*), as disseminated by *Cité Libre*, the propaganda arm of the Quebec Regime. See Also: "Until recently in Quebec, the two language groups functioned according to a tacit understanding: The English ran business and the French controlled government and culture." Arnopoulos, 159. *Exact historiography tells a very different*

Desmarais' Franco-Canadian nationalism gave him access to Prime Ministers in Quebec City and Ottawa. Desmarais chose this role himself, as he explained to Peter Newman: The *Desmarais system* was harsh, he himself admitted, especially with regards to minorities.¹³

tale: In Quebec, as well as in Canada, both Anglophones and Francophones ran, and still run, business, government and culture. The rational distinction between superior and inferior ruling classes does not correspond with the historical division between Anglophones and Francophones in the American world. [Editor]

¹³ See: "In his work on the *Canadian Establishment*, the Pope of Canadian political and business journalism, Peter Charles Newman, devoted some 60 pages to Paul Desmarais. But not without trouble. Although Newman is considered by many as the official historian of the Canadian business elite, just before the publication in 1975 of his book on the *Canadian Establishment*, he was challenged in court by Paul Desmarais who, according to *The Gazette*, 'did not like the things that Newman wrote concerning Desmarais' treatment of some minority shareholders of his *holding company*.' Desmarais then hired the Toronto lawyer J.J. Robinette and sought to obtain an injunction aimed at blocking the publication of the book. The two sources cited by Newman, governors of the *Bourse de Montréal*, then got cold-feet (*pris le bois*) and the editor, McClelland and Stewart, one of the largest publishing houses in Canada, was forced to cover over the unfortunate paragraph with a sticker in each one of the 75,000 copies. In another book of his, Newman slavishly wrote a chapter on Desmarais which he entitled 'King Paul.'" Robin Philpot, *Derrière*

When he was snubbed by the Canadian establishment (*Argus* 1975, *Canadian Pacific* 1982), Desmarais had two options: Either he could endorse public opinion and his image as the greedy and corrupt backer of the *Quebec Regime in Ottawa*, otherwise he could join the camp of the anti-federalists in the *Parti Québécois* and the Quebec sovereignty movement,—the government of Premier René Lévesque made overtures in this direction, especially concerning the question of the propriety of the *Canadian Pacific* via *la Caisse de dépôt* deal in 1982.¹⁴

L'État Desmarais: Power, 2ième édition, Montréal, 2014, 11-12.
[Editor]

¹⁴ *La Caisse de dépôts et de placements du Québec (CDPQ): Quebec Pension Plan*. For the next 30 odd years fourteen cents of every dollar spent on the BC *SkyTrain* goes to Quebec: British Columbians did not build the *SkyTrain*. The Lion's share of the infrastructure cash ended-up in the pockets of *SNC-Lavalin* (builders of Gadhafi's torture chambers and extermination centres), *Bombardier Corporation* (biggest corporate welfare bum in Canadian history) and the *Quebec Pension Plan* (under the thumb of *Power Corporation*). Under the BC Liberal and New Democratic governments, and the Quebec Regime in Victoria (e.g., Michel Fournier and friends), after the party was over, British Columbians crept-up to the table and were left with the crumbs (and a public debt which every year consumes a good portion of their incomes in provincial taxes). [Editor]

Paul Desmarais ultimately chose the former position, undoubtedly because he feared the loss of his fortune entailed by a more level playing-field, but also because the anti-federalism of the *Parti Québécois* and the Quebec sovereignty movement is based upon social democracy: Desmarais insisted he himself was a “die-hard conservative” like Ronald Reagan, who in his own words was, “the best of them all.”¹⁵ *In other words, Paul Desmarais was probably the most corrupt businessman in Canadian history, and therefore he was also a very evil person.*

¹⁵ The “*Red Tory*” connexions to Paul Desmarais’ so-called *conservatisme* is evidenced in his strong support over the years of Brian Mulroney and the *Progressive Conservative Party*, as well as his strong support over the years of *federalisme asymetrique* (of which he was a great beneficiary) and the *Liberal Party of Canada* under Pierre-Elliott Trudeau, Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin: The “Franco-Canadian conservatism” of Paul Desmarais is therefore most certainly at odds with the *American conservative legacy* of Ronald Reagan. See: “[Mulroney] said labor must play ‘a full partnership role’ with business and government in deciding the country’s future.” *The Montreal Gazette*, 15 May 1986, A9. [Editor]

The Lessons of Paul Desmarais?

In 1972 Jean Bouthillette vividly characterized the essence of Paul Desmarais in the following manner: “Contradiction is the ultimate source of the political opportunism of the *traditional Quebec ruling class*, which was—and still is—both nationalistic and patriotic: The survival instinct and the endeavour to remain in power at all cost, has caused our leaders to flatter the populace with slogans of freedom, which over the years has also convinced the British of our loyalty to the Crown. This duality of personality naturally leads to a dualism in politics, characteristic of all colonized peoples.”

After a half century of Paul Desmarais’ monstrous duplicity, will we now learn to recognize the other foxes in the henhouse, disguised in sheep’s clothing, who purposely confuse in the most diabolical manner their

own private pecuniary interests with the public interest of Quebec?¹⁶

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¹⁶ See: “In the *Kingdom of Desmarais*, all modern Canadian political and economic distinctions between liberalism, conservatism and socialism are therefore become merely relative, and therefore their notion is become outdated in the rational development of the Absolute in world history, and therefore the old political and economic conception of Canada is undone and yet also overcome in the period of the *Quebec Regime in Ottawa, 1968-2006*. *Ottawa is now the first sphere of Americanism*: The Quebec Regime therefore signalises the end of modern European *Raison d’État* in Canada,—in the *world historical sublation* of Global civilisation. The selfsame *political and economic rationality of Americanism* is also evidenced in every other region of the 20th century, in the rise of the *American world*: In the Kingdom of Desmarais the *old conception of Canada* is therefore undone, but within the *world historical realm of Globalism* is yet also overcome ...” Christopher Richard Wade Dettling, *Americanism: The New Hegelian Orthodoxy*, Revised Edition, archive.org, 21 March 2016, 18-20. [Editor]

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